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Blackout of Civil Liberties in Humboldt County?

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BLACKOUT OF CIVIL LIBERTIES IN HUMBOLDT COUNTY?

Under the pressure of Wall Street which desires to spread the imperialist war and to involve America directly, there has been an increasing attack on our civil liberties. This follows the pattern established in 1914-17, with President Roosevelt in the place of Wilson and Attorney-General Murphy, in the place of Palmer.

The general war hysteria has led first to an attack on the Communist Party, because the Communists are outspoken opponents of the imperialist war. In the investigation of the Communists during the past year, it is to the credit of the Communists that only non-political charges of alleged passport irregularities have been brought against them.

But the attack against the Communists is only a smoke-screen. The real intention of the reactionaries is to hamstring, weaken, or smash all progressive organizations of the people-- the trade unions, the farm organizations, progressive pension groups, etc., who do or may oppose the imperialist war.

In San Francisco, U.S. Attorney Thurman Arnold has caused to be indicted the leaders of two of the most conservative AF of L unions, the Electricians and the Plasters -- holding that the union contracts signed by these organizations cause a monopoly. The same U.S. Attorney now threatens to charge the 'Frisco longshoremen with interfering with interstate commerce. The longshoremen have been locked out by the shipowners, and the Governor of California, the U.S. Labor Dept., and the U.S. Maritime Commission condemn the shipowners for closing the port. But the longshoremen are threatened with Federal action.

In Eureka, a local trade-unionist was denied citizenship papers because a police officer alleged that two years ago he found radical literature in the man's room. The same police officer arrested the unionist while he was picketing the Eureka Inn some two years ago, but the jury found him not guilty on a phoney "morals" charge.

A women's trade union group has made false statements in the local press about Communists being on WPA, wanting to be there, and holding important positions. Union leaders are carrying around a false list of names of so-called Communists seeking important positions on WPA so that they can re-write the City charter. These charges are completely false, but they serve to build up prejudice against the Communists with a view to eventually denying Communists and all unemployed people the rights now afforded them -- the right to work, and to think and speak freely. We suggest that these labor leaders and their organizations look to the preservation of the civil liberties of CIO and AF of L unionists. (Incidentally, the city charter can be re-written only by a group of freeholders elected by the people of Eureka for that purpose.)

The great majority of the American people feel very deeply **that** for America to involve itself in war to help the British Empire or a crusade of capitalist nations against the socialist government of the Soviet Union would be stupid and criminal.

The first step in keeping out of any and all wars is the defense of the civil liberties of all groups opposed to any such imperialist war.

Eureka Branch, Communist Party, U.S.A.
501 W. Wabash.

The following is the answer of Mrs Huntington, New York society matron who posted bail for Earl Browder, to the query why she had done so:

"Dear Mrs Huntington,

I followed with great interest stories of your assistance to Earl Browder in the latest attempt of reaction to stifle at least one voice that might cry out the truth at this time, when Wall Street seems so determined to drag us into another European, imperialist war...

Personally, I've never been any nearer to Russia than Bedloe's Island, but I think Earl Browder's is the clearest, most intelligent and most honest voice in America today. And I'll bet if that old, hardy frontiersman who happened to be my great-great-grandpappy were alive, he'd say so too.

Yours very truly,

Katherine Booth Wilson
East Cleveland, Ohio."

"From the typewriter of a woman whose name I did not know until yesterday comes this testimony of indignation stirring in the country. There is a creeping fear among broad sections of our people that they, too, will be drawn into imperialist war. There is recognition now of why efforts on the part of reaction are intensifying to separate all liberals and progressives from the entire mass of people.

For weeks I have watched the mounting tension. When Mr Browder was arrested I furnished bail for him, first, because I am one among thousands who wish to hear his voice speaking against our entrance into imperialist war, and second, because we must remember our Bill of Rights. We include the right of free speech, of secret ballot, of fair trial, in our conception of our Bill of Rights.

If these are taken away from us we may well ask ourselves, how soon shall we see concentration camps in America?

Hester G. Huntington."

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1. Finland and the International Situation.
Thursday, Jan. 4, 1940
2. Youth and War.
Thursday, Jan. 18, 1940
3. Newspapers and War.
Thursday, Feb. 1, 1940

501 W.Wabash, 8 P.M. -- Public Invited.

Eureka Branch, Communist Party, U.S.A.